- State Agriculture Ministers Conference held on 21.8.2009 to review the position and facilitate drawing up and implementing appropriate Agriculture & Constructive Action Plan.
- A meeting of Relief Commissioners of drought affected States held on 27th August 2009 to review measures being taken to reduce the impact of drought.
- Rabi 2009 Conference held on 24-25 September, 2009.
- Video Conference held on 5th & 6th October, 2009 with the drought declared States including some other States *viz.* Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Haryana & Gujarat to review the issues relating to drought management, preparedness for Rabi season and status of implementation and expenditure under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Scheme for 25 kg. rice at Rs. 3 per kg.

199. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is proposing to issue 25 kg. of rice in a month at Rs. 3 per kg.;

(b) if so, when it will be issued;

(c) the financial commitment to Government by this scheme every year; and

(d) the political implication of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir. Foodgrains are allocated to States/Union Territories under Targeted Public Distribution System for their distribution to ration cardholders at subsidized prices. Government proposes to enact National Food Security Act as announced by the Honourable President of India in her address to the Joint Session of Parliament on 4th June, 2009.

(b) to (d) At present, Government is examining various aspects of the proposed law.

Implementation of PDS

200. DR. K.MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Public Distribution Scheme would be a success when it is not well organised in many States and is subject to a lot of misuse;

(b) the foolproof system contemplated to ensure effective and successful implementation of the scheme; and

(c) the measures to avert political interference in terms of selection of beneficiaries and to ensure right quantity and quality at right time to the beneficiaries?